

What is claimed is:

1. Friction clutch for a drive assembly of a motor vehicle which operates between an internal-combustion engine and a transmission and comprises a clutch release device, the clutch release device being arranged inside a transmission/clutch housing having a clutch release bearing and a hydraulic operating device with a cylinder housing and an operating piston operating in the latter,

wherein the cylinder housing of the hydraulic operating device is mounted on a bearing structure arranged in use adjacent to the internal-combustion engine and the friction clutch, which bearing structure is constructed independently of the transmission/clutch housing.

2. Friction clutch according to Claim 1, wherein the bearing structure is fastened to a wall of the internal-combustion engine forming a face.

3. Friction clutch according to Claim 2, wherein the bearing structure is equipped with a bearing plate arranged at a distance from the wall of the internal-combustion engine and from the friction clutch, on which bearing plate the cylinder housing of the operating device is mounted.

4. Friction clutch according to Claim 3, wherein the bearing plate is provided with fastening struts which are oriented toward the wall, reach around an outside diameter of the friction clutch, are supported on the wall and are fastened to that wall by means of screws.

5. Friction clutch according to Claim 4, wherein each fastening strut has a strut eye with a circular-cylindrical cross-section, and

wherein relatively short stiffening flanges extend tangentially away from the strut eye.

6. Friction clutch according to Claim 3, wherein the bearing plate has approximately the shape of an equilateral triangle with sides, at whose vertexes the fastening struts are mounted.

7. Friction clutch according to Claim 4, wherein the bearing plate has approximately the shape of an equilateral triangle with sides, at whose vertexes the fastening struts are mounted.

8. Friction clutch according to Claim 5, wherein the bearing plate has approximately the shape of an equilateral triangle with sides, at whose vertexes the fastening struts are mounted.

9. Friction clutch according to Claim 4, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

10. Friction clutch according to Claim 6, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

11. Friction clutch according to Claim 7, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

12. Friction clutch according to Claim 8, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

13. Friction clutch according to Claim 3, wherein that the cylinder housing is made in one piece with the bearing plate.

14. Friction clutch according to Claim 4, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

15. Friction clutch according to Claim 5, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

16. Friction clutch according to Claim 6, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

17. Friction clutch according to Claim 9, wherein the fastening struts are made in one piece with the bearing plate.

18. Friction clutch according to Claim 3, wherein the bearing plate is constructed as a cast part of a light-metal or iron-metal type.

19. Friction clutch according to Claim 4, wherein the bearing plate is constructed as a cast part of a light-metal or iron-metal type.

20. Friction clutch according to Claim 9, wherein the bearing plate is constructed as a cast part of a light-metal or iron-metal type.

21. Friction clutch according to Claim 13, wherein the bearing plate is constructed as a cast part of a light-metal or iron-metal type.

22. Friction clutch according to Claim 1, wherein connections and lines for the hydraulic operating device are integrated in the bearing plate.

23. Friction clutch according to Claim 2, wherein connections and lines for the hydraulic operating device are integrated in the bearing plate.

24. Friction clutch according to Claim 18, wherein connections and lines for the hydraulic operating device are integrated in the bearing plate.